

*JBPrins et al. The Lancet March (2001) Vol. 357 #9259 p.841.*

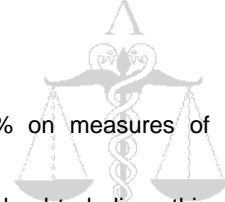
A multi centre randomised controlled trial of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). The main aim was to find out if CBT is generally effective and that its effectiveness is not just the effect of interaction with a talented therapist.

476 patients with a diagnosis of chronic fatigue syndrome were randomly assigned to treatment as usual, a support group or CBT. CBT was designed to deal with issues of control, low physical activity and over attention to bodily symptoms. 13 nursing staff were trained in the modality.

The study was continued for 14 months after therapy and was well attended.

CBT was more effective than its comparison groups. Improvements of 20-30% on measures of functional capacity.

The authors speculate that success could be improved further if patients were not lead to believe this will be a cure and, that those with a history of inactivity should be **told** that they will be introduced to physical exercise more slowly than the average.



### **Comment**

CFS has many parallels with DRSI and Fibromyalgia including, the rationale behind treatment.

This study provides convincing evidence that training in CBT can be effectively provided to non-specialists and that CBT can make significant improvements in functional activity.